UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
LIMITED

A/AC.238/L.2/Add.2/Rev.1
14 September 1991

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

AD HOC COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ON THE
FINAL REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE
UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME OF ACTION
FOR AFRICAN ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND
DEVELOPMENT
3-13 September 1991
Agenda item 4

FINAL REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR AFRICAN ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT 1986-1990

Action-oriented measures and recommendations for sustained and sustainable growth and development in Africa beyond 1991

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UNITED NATIONS NEW AGENDA FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICA IN THE 1990S

I. PREAMBLE

1. The final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 (UN-PAAERD) offers yet another opportunity for renewing the commitment of the international community to support Africa's own efforts to achieve self-sustaining socio-economic growth and development. It is also an occasion to refocus world attention on the socio-economic difficulties which continue to face the African countries. Africa's development is primarily the responsibility of Africans. The international community accepts the principle of shared responsibility and full partnership with Africa and therefore commits itself to giving full and tangible support to the African efforts.

2. The circumstances which led to the adoption of UN-PAAERD are as valid today as they were in 1986. Assessments made by African countries themselves or by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and many other organizations and independent observers point to the fact that Africa's socio-economic conditions actually worsened overall over the past five years of the UN-PAAERD period.

3. The current critical economic situation in Africa calls for solidarity among States Members of the United Nations to act in concert to address the problem. The international community renews its efforts to assist Africa, as enunciated under UN-PAAERD and in General Assembly resolution 43/27 of 18 November 1988, in which the Assembly stated, inter alia, that "the African economic crisis is one that concerns the international community as a whole" and that "the Programme of Action provides an important framework for cooperation between Africa and the international community", which needs to be renewed in the 1990s.

4. That is why the international community and the countries of Africa should renew their commitment to an agenda of cooperation for sustainable social and economic development of Africa in the 1990s. The agenda is specific and clearly focused on goals and targets to be achieved within that time-frame.

5. A desirable objective should be an average real growth rate of at least 6 per cent per annum of gross national product (GNP) throughout the period of the new Agenda in order for the continent to achieve sustained and sustainable economic growth and equitable development, increase income and eradicate poverty.

6. The new Agenda has as its priority objectives the accelerated transformation, integration, diversification and growth of the African economies, in order to strengthen them within the world economy, reduce their vulnerability to external shocks and increase their dynamism, internalize the process of development and enhance self-reliance.

7. The new Agenda also accords special attention to human development and increased productive employment, and promotes rapid progress towards the achievement of human-oriented goals by the year 2000 in the areas of life expectancy, integration of women in development, child and maternal mortality, nutrition, health, water and sanitation, basic education and shelter.

8. Peace is an indispensable prerequisite for development. The end of the cold war has opened up opportunites for the peaceful resolution of conflicts and for the intensification of international cooperation for development, particularly with Africa. Peace initiatives by African countries should be encouraged and pursued in order to bring an end to war, destabilization and internal conflicts so as to facilitate the creation of optimal conditions for development. The international community as a whole should endeavour to cooperate with and support the efforts of African countries for a rapid restoration of peace, normalization of life for uprooted populations and

national socio-economic reconstruction. Resources freed from military expenditures in all countries can be redirected to socio-economic growth and development.

9. In order to achieve these broad objectives, it is necessary for the international community to enter into a new and stronger accord with Africa, which would spell out clearly the firm commitment of the international community to support and assist Africa in its efforts to implement successfully its development agenda and to reduce, if not entirely eliminate, external impediments and obstacles to Africa's accelerated socio-economic transformation. This New Agenda reflects a mutuality of commitments and accountability and is in two parts: what Africa commits itself to do and what the international community commits itself to do.

II. INTERNATIONAL AGENDA

A. Africa's responsibility and commitment

1. Achievement of sustained and sustainable growth and development

10. Africa is committed to the implementation of policies for the transformation of the structure of its economies in order to achieve growth and development on a sustained and sustainable basis. African countries will persist with necessary reforms and pursue improvement of domestic economic management, including effective mobilization and utilization of domestic resources.

2. Promotion of regional and subregional economic cooperation and integration

11. Africa is resolved to pursue with vigour the policy of achieving effective regional and subregional economic cooperation and integration and is thus committed to the establishment of the African Economic Community - the treaty of which was signed by African leaders on 3 June 1991, in Abuja, Nigeria - and to the effective functioning of its subregional organizations - namely, the Preferential Trade Area of Eastern and Southern Africa (PTA), the Economic Community of Western African States (ECOWAS), the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), and the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC). Africa believes that regional and subregional cooperation and integration will bring about effective transformation of its economies.

12. Africa is committed to the promotion of sectorial-integration of its economies and to ensuring the development and maintenance of reliable networks of agricultural, physical, industrial and institutional infrastructures on the continent. Africa will focus its efforts on the implementation of programmes for the Second United Nations Transport and Communications Decade in Africa and the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa.

3. Intensification of the democratization process

13. Africa is determined to press ahead with the democratization of development and the full implementation of the African Charter of People's and Human Rights, the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation, and the Declaration of the Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) at their 1990 Summit on the Political and Socio-Economic Situation in Africa and the Fundamental Changes Taking Place in the World. Africa is convinced that growth and development on a sustained and sustainable basis can come about only as a result of the full participation of the people in the development process, and to this end continues to be committed to pursuing the process of democratization.

4. Investment promotion

14. Africa is also committed to the creation of an enabling environment that attracts foreign and domestic direct investment, encourages savings, induces the return of flight capital and promotes the full participation by the private sector, including non-governmental organizations, in the growth and development process. Farmers - in particular, small farmers - informal-sector traders and crafts people, and entrepreneurs constitute important elements in the productive base of the economy.

5. Human dimension

15. Africa is equally committed to improving the human rights and the living standards of its people, including the reduction of poverty. Africa is further committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for women at all levels and giving adequate attention to the needs of children.

16. African countries are committed to the intensification of their efforts in human resource development and capacity-building, especially in science, technology and management, and to taking measures to arrest and reverse the brain drain.

6. Environment and development

17. Africa is fully committed to the promotion of sustainable development at all levels of socio-economic activity. Through the Bamako Convention, Africa took the decisive step of banning the import of toxic waste into Africa. Moreover, the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification remains a viable framework for cooperation in the field of desertification. The international community is called upon to contribute more effectively to the implementation of the Plan. The programme of relevant subregional organizations should continue to receive the full support of Africa and the international community. Africa is keenly participating in international negotiations on climate change, bio-diversity and the preparatory process of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in 1992. In all

these negotiations, Africa is fully convinced that the problems of environment and development should be tackled in an integrated and balanced manner, fully taking into account the "polluter pays" principle.

7. Population and development

18. Africa is committed to the deliberate and systematic integration of population factors into the development process in order, inter alia, to contain the tremendous strain and stress that a rapid rate of population growth puts on development. To that end, Africa will continue the efforts initiated under the Kilimanjaro Programme of Action for African Population and Self-Reliant Development in 1984, which currently constitutes Africa's framework for devising and implementing national population policies, in all their interrelated aspects, including a reduction in maternal and child mortality and provisions for family planning and female education and the achievement of substantial and sustained increases in the quality of life and standard of living of the entire population. In this regard, reference is also made to the Amsterdam Declaration of 1989.

8. Agriculture, rural development and food security

19. Africa is committed to the continued pursuit of policies and strategies in the agricultural and rural development sectors in order fully to integrate rural economies into their national contexts and to achieve food security and strengthen self-reliance in food. Africa is committed to the improvement of agricultural policies, the enhancement of agricultural productivity, the improvement of distribution mechanisms, and the establishment of reliable market schemes, credit system and adequate storage facilities. Efforts will be made to provide food producers - particularly women - with the necessary resources.

9. South/South cooperation

20. Africa is determined to intensify South/South cooperation which Africa is convinced is an indispensable element for the success of the new Agenda for international cooperation.

10. Role of non-governmental organizations

21. The focus of the international agenda on popular participation, human resource development and capacity-building calls for an increased role for non-governmental organizations (African and non-African) in various areas, including the promotion of indigenous small-scale businesses, especially in the rural sector, community development projects, training etc. African non-governmental organizations should particularly be involved, without any administrative impediment, in the mobilization and efficient utilization of domestic resources.

B. Responsibility and commitment of the international community

22. The international community commits itself to assisting Africa in its efforts to achieve accelerated growth and human-centred development on a sustained and sustainable basis. Such support will cover the areas discussed below.

1. Solution of Africa's debt problem

23. Africa's debt burden constitutes a critical bottleneck constraining the recovery and development of the continent. Therefore, a major priority is to tackle Africa's external debt problem which is a serious threat to the continent's recovery and long-term development prospects. In spite of the implementation of several international initiatives, the situation has not significantly improved. Africa's external debt exceeded $US 270 billion in 1990, with the ratio of external debt to GDP and to exports amounting to over 90 per cent and 334 per cent, respectively. The servicing of this debt accounts for over 30 per cent of the continent's exports.

24. This situation calls for innovative and bold measures to solve Africa's debt problems and the intensification of efforts in the context of the evolving international debt strategy on the part of all concerned. The international community, therefore, in support of Africa's economic reform efforts, undertakes to seek to find durable solutions to the African debt crisis.

25. At the London Summit in July 1991, the Group of 7 countries agreed that Africa deserves special attention. Specifically, agreement was reached on the need for additional debt relief measures going well beyond the relief granted under Toronto Terms. It called on the Paris Club to implement the measures promptly.

26. Recognizing the magnitude of Africa's debt problem, the measures envisioned by this new Agenda include:

(a) A further cancellation or reduction of official development assistance (ODA) debt and debt service;

(b) A further cancellation of or reduction in other official bilateral debt or debt service;

(c) Encouragement of the write-off of private commercial debt and the use of such techniques as debt-equity swaps, debt for the establishment of export-oriented joint ventures, debt buy-backs, debt for environment schemes and debt for poverty alleviation through greater use of the existing and agreed new facilities;

(d) Serious consideration to reducing the burden of debt owed by Africa to multilateral financial institutions, which now accounts for about 40 per cent of the continent's debt-servicing obligations, through the assistance of donor countries;

(e) Early implementation of the IMF quota increase under the Ninth General Review and the associated Third Amendment to the Articles of Agreement;

(f) Additional measures should take into account the need for Africa to benefit from new financial flows, particularly ODA.

27. The international community should continue to give serious consideration to the proposal calling for the organization of an international conference on Africa's external indebtedness.

2. Resource flows

28. A critical element of the support from the international community is the provision of adequate resource flows to Africa. These resources are needed to contribute to achieving sustained real growth in GNP per capita. To achieve an average annual growth rate of real GNP of at least 6 per cent by African countries over the course of the 1990s the Secretary-General of the United Nations has estimated that a minimum of $US 30 billion in net ODA is required in 1992, after which the real net ODA would need to grow at an average rate of 4 per cent per annum. The international community undertakes to pursue its efforts to provide additional resource flows to Africa which will complement domestic efforts and financial resources, bearing in mind these targets. The international community also reaffirms its commitment to work in order to attain the accepted United Nations targets of devoting 0.7 per cent of GNP to ODA as well as the agreed targets established at the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries.

29. The international community would introduce measures and devise programmes to encourage direct foreign investment in African countries, and support the policy changes undertaken by African countries to attract foreign investment.

3. Commodities

30. Diversification is a strategic short- and long-term solution to the severe commodity problem in Africa which has impeded its economic recovery and development. In order to support effectively efforts to diversify commodity exports and boost earnings, the international community, particularly the major trading partners, commit themselves to grant improved market access to Africa's exports through substantial reduction in or removal of trade barriers. To this end, the international community should ensure an early balanced and successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round. The international community commits itself to correct imperfections in commodity markets.

31. In the short term, the international community recognizes the importance of compensatory financing through such schemes as the IMF's Compensatory and Contingency Financing Facility, STABEX, SYSMIN and the Swiss Compensatory Financing Programme and, where appropriate, will examine the means of improving the scope and operations of these schemes. Efforts at international cooperation among producers and consumers of commodities of particular importance to Africa should be renewed, with a view to increasing export earnings of Africa from such commodities through processing and technical assistance.

4. Support for the diversification of the African economies

32. Diversification of the African economies provides a major way out of commodity export dependence and its related problems and contributes to the achievement of more dynamic and resilient economies. While such diversification is primarily the responsibility of African countries, the international community recognizes that additional resources will be required to support Africa's diversification programmes, including development of specific infrastructural and support services and the development of information networks and related services for diversification programmes and projects.

33. The international community notes the proposal that an African diversification fund should be established to provide an essential focal point to galvanize the technical assistance that is required and to provide additional finance for the development and implementation of diversification programmes and projects.

34. A study on the need for and the feasibility of the establishment of a diversification fund for Africa's commodities should urgently be undertaken by the Secretary-General for presentation in 1993 to the General Assembly together with the comments and observations of Member States. The international community will continue to support Africa's effort.

5. Trade

35. In order to support effectively efforts to diversify Africa's economies and to boost export earnings, the international community commits itself to a substantial reduction in or removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers affecting African exports, particularly of processed, semi-processed and manufactured products, and to ensure continued preferential arrangements currently enjoyed by African exports. To this end, the international community should ensure an early balanced and successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round.

6. Support for regional economic integration: environment, science and technology

36. The international community intends to support African countries in their efforts to establish the African Economic Community, strengthen the functioning of the existing subregional intergovernmental organizations and implement joint programmes and projects.

37. Support will also be given to arresting environmental degradation and to enhancing the scientific and technological capacities of African countries.

7. Role of the United Nations system

38. The United Nations system should play a major role in the implementation of the international Agenda. First and foremost, the various United Nations organizations and specialized agencies, in their respective areas and sectors, should devise specific programmes for Africa which are consistent with the elements of the Agenda, and devote adequate resources for their implementation. In this regard, special consideration should be given to programmes that are essential in fostering the economic integration of the African region, such as those related to the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa and the Second United Nations Transport and Communications Decade for Africa, as well as other relevant programmes submitted by regional and subregional organizations.

39. The United Nations system should also contribute to ensuring an efficient follow-up and monitoring of the implementation of the international Agenda. Specifically, a continuous assessment of Africa's performance in the areas outlined in the agenda would have a great impact in maintaining the momentum within and outside Africa and, eventually, for renewed commitments to the agreed objectives and targets.

8. Role of non-African non-governmental organizations

40. Non-African non-governmental organizations should be given every encouragement to assist in the formulation and implementation of development assistance projects in the context of the international Agenda. They should also assist in promoting non-governmental organizations at the national, subregional and regional levels in Africa.

III. FOLLOW-UP, MONITORING AND EVALUATION MACHINERY

41. The follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the new Agenda will require the full involvement of Governments, organizations and programmes of the United Nations system as well as the participation of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

42. To that end the following arrangements for the evaluation, assessment and monitoring of the United Nations Agenda for the development of Africa in the 1990s are adopted:

(a) In 1993 the General Assembly will conduct a preliminary consideration of the implementation of the Agenda;

(b) In 1995 the Economic and Social Council will devote part of its high-level segment to the consideration of the implementation of the Agenda;

(c) In 1996 the General Assembly will conduct a mid-term review of the implementation of the Agenda;

(d) In 1998 the Economic and Social Council will devote part of its high-level segment to the implementation of the Agenda;

(e) In the year 2000 the General Assembly will conduct the final review and assessment of the implementation of the Agenda.

43. For the mid-term review in 1996 and the final review and assessment in the year 2000, the General Assembly will take the necessary measures, including, if required, the establishment of an ad hoc committee for the preparation of these reviews.

44. The Secretary-General, taking into account the relevant inputs from relevant organs, organizations and programmes of the United Nations system and other competent bodies, will provide an analytical assessment of the implementation of the new Agenda and make concrete recommendations thereon to the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, according to the arrangements outlined in paragraph 42.

45. The assessment and recommendations of OAU on the implementation of the new Agenda will also be submitted to the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

46. The Secretary-General of the United Nations will ensure appropriate and adequate support for the follow-up process, including the continuation of the effective public information activities and mobilization of efforts to raise international awareness of the economic crisis in Africa.

47. The ongoing initiatives aimed at assisting Africa in its development efforts should be encouraged. In this regard, consultative groups such as the Global Coalition for Africa should assist in rallying international support for the implementation of the new Agenda. The Global Coalition for Africa may be invited to attend the meetings of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council devoted to the new Agenda for Africa.